

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 SAJ-01 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6409

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, FR

SUBJECT: "LE FIGARO" INTERVIEW OF FRG CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT

1. SUMMARY: IN INTERVIEW WITH "LE FIGARO", SCHMIDT DISCUSSED FRG ROLE AS "GREAT POWER," PARIS/BONN AXIS, EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE AND PLO, U.S. USE OF GERMAN TERRITORY FOR MIDDLE EAST CONTINGENCY, AND FRENCH TROOPS IN GERMANY. END SUMMARY.

2. FEBRUARY 3 EDITION OF PARIS NEWSPAPER "LE FIGARO" CARRIES LENGTHY INTERVIEW WITH WEST GERMAN CHANCELLOR
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SCHMIDT. PUBLICATION OF THIS INTERVIEW COINCIDED WITH

OPENING OF TWO-DAY FRANCO-GERMAN SUMMIT MEETING IN PARIS
(PARIS 1945). FOLLOWING ARE KEY POINTS MADE BY SCHMIDT
IN THE INTERVIEW. TEXT POUCHED EUR/WE AND EUR/CE.

3. FRG AS A "GREAT POWER": ASKED HOW HE VIEWS HIMSELF
IN HIS ROLE AS LEADER OF A "GREAT POWER," SCHMIDT
RESPONDED THAT HE DOES NOT LIKE TO USE THE TERM "GREAT
POWER" IN CONNECTION WITH THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC. BUT, HE
CONTINUED, "IF YOU YOURSELF SAY THAT GERMAN ECONOMIC,
MONETARY, COMMERCIAL AND EVEN MILITARY IMPORTANCE HAS
GROWN IN RECENT YEARS, I COULD NOT ARGUE WITH YOU. THAT
IS A FACT. WE ARE NOT . . . A WORLD POWER AND WE DO NOT
FORGET THAT . . . OUR FOREIGN POLICY IS MORE VULNERABLE
THAN THAT OF FRANCE OR GREAT BRITAIN. THE FRENCH DO
NOT HAVE TO BE CONCERNED (SE SOUCIER) ABOUT A SECOND
FRENCH STATE. THE ENGLISH DO NOT HAVE AN EQUIVALENT TO
THE GDR. THAT IS WHY, IN MY OPINION, GERMAN FOREIGN
POLICY MUST REMAIN VERY PRUDENT, EVEN IF GERMANY SHOULD
BECOME MORE IMPORTANT.

4. PARIS/BONN AXIS: REACTING TO A QUESTION WHICH
SUPPOSED FRANCO-GERMAN COOPERATION TO RESOLVE EUROPE'S
CRISIS, SCHMIDT RESPONDED THAT BOTH FRANCE AND GERMANY
BENEFITTED FROM SUCCESSFUL ECONOMIC POLICIES OVER
RECENT YEARS, AND ADDED, "BUT I UNDERLINE THAT WE HAVE
NO INTENTION OF CREATING A FRANCO-GERMAN NUCLEUS WITHIN
THE EC -- THAT IS OUT OF THE QUESTION."

5. EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE AND PLO: ON THIS SUBJECT, SCHMIDT
SAID, "I CANNOT SERIOUSLY ENVISION PLO PARTICIPATION IN
THE EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE AS LONG AS THE PLO HAS NOT CLEARLY
DEFINED ITS POSITION ON TWO POINTS: THE RIGHT OF ISRAEL
TO EXIST WITHIN GUARANTEED FRONTIERS, AND THE RENUNCIA-
TION OF TERRORIST ACTS. THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE FRG
DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE DISTRESS AND THE NEEDS OF THE
PALESTINIANS. THESE, HOWEVER, ARE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS."
WHEN PRESSED TO STATE WHETHER HE WAS OPPOSED TO THE
PLO'S PARTICIPATION IN THE EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE, SCHMIDT
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RESPONDED, "I DON'T WANT TO SAY ANYTHING MORE."

(COMMENT: LOCAL PRESS REPORT QUOTES SCHMIDT AS SAYING THAT PLO PARTICIPATION IN EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE WAS NOT DISCUSSED DURING HIS MEETING WITH GISCARD DURING FIRST DAY OF SUMMIT.)

6. AMERICAN USE OF GERMAN TERRITORY FOR MIDDLE EAST CONTINGENCY: ON THIS QUESTION, SCHMIDT SAID, "I PREFER NOT TO COMMENT ON THIS AFFAIR. NO PRESSURE HAS BEEN EXERCISED ON US IN THIS SENSE. AND, MOREOVER, WE WOULD UNCLASSIFIED

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NOT ACCEPT IT."

7. FRENCH FORCES IN GERMANY: ASKED TO DESCRIBE THE IMPORTANCE THAT HE ATTACHED TO THE FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE IN GERMANY, SCHMIDT RESPONDED, "YOU RAISE ONE OF THE AREAS WHERE FRENCH AND GERMANS ARE NOT IN AGREEMENT. IT CONCERNS THEIR CONCEPTION OF A COMMON DEFENSE. GERMANY IS A MEMBER OF NATO. FRANCE DOES NOT BELONG TO IT . . . IT IS NECESSARY THAT FRENCH OPINION UNDERSTAND THAT, IN SPITE OF OUR DIFFERING OPINIONS CONCERNING NATO, FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE SEEMS ESSENTIAL TO US. BECAUSE, ONE DAY IT MAY VERY WELL SHOW ITSELF TO BE NECESSARY. SUCH A HYPOTHESIS IS NOT THE CASE TODAY, BUT NO ONE WOULD TOTALLY EXCLUDE IT. THEREFORE, WE HOPE THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT DOES NOT CONSIDER WITHDRAWING THE FRENCH TROOPS FROM GERMANY. THAT COULD GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT FRANCE IS COMPLETELY DISINTERESTED IN THE COMMON DEFENSE."
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PARIS03061
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750041-0026
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750274/aaaacono.tel
Line Count: 188
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 APR 2003 by RuthemTJ>; APPROVED <09 JAN 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: "LE FIGARO" INTERVIEW OF FRG CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT
TAGS: PFOR, GE, FR, (SCHMIDT, HELMUT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006